



**UNCG Spring 2017 // FMS 150-01**  
**Zero to Hero: Hercules and the Role of the Hero in the Ancient World**  
**Dr. Robyn Le Blanc**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the role and nature of Hercules, the Greek demigod and son of Zeus, as a “hero” in the ancient world. We explore the life and exploits of Hercules through Greek and Roman literature (plays, hymns, poems), art, architecture, and religious practice. The class also considers Hercules’ legacy for leaders in the ancient world, and his modern day appeal in appearance in movies, comic books, video games, and novels. We ask: what makes a hero in the Greek and Roman worlds? How do ancient conceptions of heroes compare to more modern ones? How does Hercules compare to other ancient heroes? What role did Hercules play in Greek and Roman religion? How did rulers use Hercules to symbolize their own power? Why was Hercules so famous?

**CLASS INFO** **MHRA 1208**  
**Tues & Thursday 9:30-10:45 am**

**CONTACT INFO** **rilleblan@uncg.edu**  
**Office: MHRA 1110**

**OFFICE HOURS** **Monday 12:30-1:30pm**  
**Tuesday & Thursday 1:30-2:30pm**  
**Or by appointment (contact via email)**

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- STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**
1. Describe the major mythological traditions attached to Hercules by a variety of different archeological and literary genres.
  2. Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally, and/or in writing
  3. Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
  4. Critically evaluate the role of Hercules in Greek and Roman mythological thought, religion, and the creation of political and social identities.
  5. Compare and contrast the role of Hercules in the Greek and Roman world to more modern conceptions of heroes, and identify the social and cultural contexts that influence these similarities and differences.
  6. Exhibit an improvement in written communication skills in a variety of subject-specific genres.
  7. Demonstrate an ability to read and interpret primary sources

## REQUIRED TEXTS

There is no textbook that contains all of the primary source texts that we will be reading in this class. Instead, I will be providing you copies of the appropriate primary sources as PDFs on Canvas or as links to open-source texts online. **You are required to print copies of particular texts (marked with a \* on the list below) so that you can bring them to class and mark on them.**

- \*Seneca, *Hercules Furens*
- \*Euripides, *Herakles*
- \*Sophocles, *The Women of Trachis/Trachiniae*
- \*Euripides, *The Children of Herakles/Heracleidae*
- \*Sophocles, *Philoctetes*
- Additional primary ancient sources (indicated on syllabus; PDFs posted to Canvas)
- Additional secondary scholarly sources (indicated on syllabus; PDFs posted to Canvas)



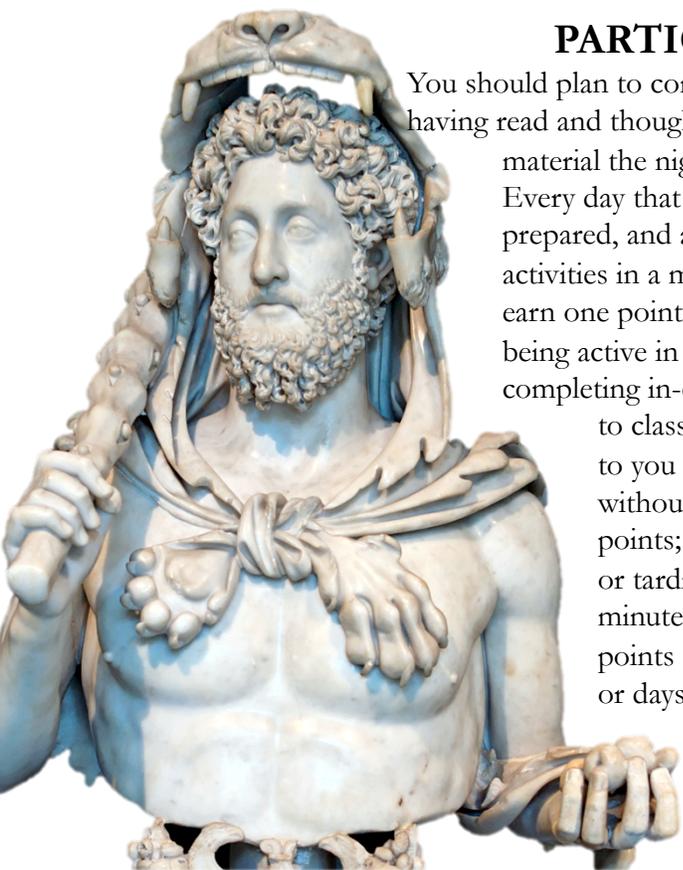
## GRADED COMPONENTS

Participation, Workshops, Conference	10%
Quizzes (online, in-class)	20%
Article Analysis #1	10%
Article Analysis Project #2	20%
Creative Project	20%
Midterm & Final Exams	20%

### PARTICIPATION

You should plan to come to class every day, having read and thought about the assigned material the night before.

Every day that you attend class prepared, and are engaged in the day's activities in a meaningful way, you will earn one point. Participation includes being active in class discussion, completing in-class activities, and coming to class with any assignments given to you for homework. Attendance without participation will earn 1/4 points; an absence for any reason, or tardiness of more than five minutes will also result in zero points for that day. Two absences or days of non-participation (worth 2 points) will be dropped at the end of the semester.



### GRADING SCALE

A+	100-97%
A	96-93%
A-	92-90%
B+	89-87%
B	86-83%
B-	82-80%
C+	79-77%
C	76-73%
C-	72-70%
D+	69-67%
D	66-63%
D-	62-60%
F	Below 60%

I am happy to discuss your grades with you. **However, university policy prohibits discussions of grades via email, and so you will have to schedule an appointment to come to my office to discuss any issues or questions you might have.** Grades will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester so that you may keep track of your performance in the class. **My "rounding" policy is as follows: I will only take into account the first number after the decimal, i.e. 89.6 will be rounded up to a 90% (A-), but an 89.59 will be a B+.** If I make an error calculating your grade I'm more than happy to fix it, but I do not negotiate grades

## QUIZZES

8-12 times over the course of the semester you will be given a reading quiz, either online or in-class. They will be based on comprehension of assigned readings. Some will be multiple-choice, and others will ask you to write a short response or analysis of something. I will drop your lowest 2 grades at the end of the semester. There will be **NO MAKEUP QUIZZES FOR ANY REASON, including excused absences.**



## FORMAT OF THE CLASS

Class time will be spent in a variety of ways: in lecture (accompanied by a powerpoint), in class discussion (either with the class as a whole, or in groups), in writing workshops, or in class activities. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings before coming to class, to participate in class discussion every day, to attend scheduled outings during class time, and to complete all assigned work. If we are discussing a text marked with a \* on the list under “Required Texts”, you should bring a hard copy of that text to class in order to take notes.

As a writing intensive (WI) class for first year students, you will spend a good part of this semester working on your writing process. This will be accomplished through both formal and informal written assignments. Informal written assignments include quick thinks, short in-class reflections, outlines of ideas, etc. You will complete three major formal written assignments over the course of the semester: two article analyses, and one creative project where you will rework an ancient myth. You will receive feedback from your instructor, and from classmates that make up your ‘writing group’ on each step of this process.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

You will complete three written assignments for this class: two article analyses, and one creative project.

### Article Analysis #1

You will write two article analyses for this class. An article analysis asks you to read a piece of scholarly writing about ancient materials, and to summarize and critique the author’s argument, methodology, and use of sources. This type of close reading of scholarly material is an essential skill to practice for every major/discipline, and will help train you to read, comprehend, and use secondary literature later in your college career. The first article analysis (**4 pages, double-spaced**) is intended to assess where you are currently at with your writing and critical analysis skills, and what areas you should focus on for improvement. You will receive substantial feedback from your peers and instructors on this essay, and you will have the opportunity to self-evaluate your work, in order to identify the areas that you want to work on for the second article analysis project. For these reasons, this particular assignment is worth less than the second article analysis; in addition, all students will write their first analysis paper on the same piece of secondary literature, in order to compare/contrast approaches, perspectives, and methodologies of doing this type of assignment.

### Article Analysis Project #2

For the second article analysis you will sign up to write on a chapter or article about Hercules from a list that I will circulate in advance. To lay the groundwork for this article analysis, we will complete three “feeder” assignments that help you scaffold, or build parts of the paper before you sit down to actually write the final draft. These feeder assignments (which will be graded on a 10-point scale) include: **an article/chapter outline; a list and analysis of the author’s sources** (both primary and secondary) **and their use** in the article/chapter; **a half page analysis (single-spaced) of the article/chapter’s main and supporting arguments.** This article analysis will be **4 pages, double-spaced.**



### Creative Project

Hercules and his exploits have inspired generations of writers, filmmakers, artists, photographers, and musicians. For this project, you will use one of myths that we cover this semester as inspiration for your own creative work. The genre is fairly flexible, but must include a written component of at least **800 words.** You might decide to write a short story, some poems, create a film, record a podcast, create artwork or a photography series, write a song, etc. A few examples of directions for this assignment include: retelling a myth from the perspective of a different character; retelling a myth in a modern setting; filling in a “gap” between different myths or stories; reinventing a myth or episode using a myth or cycle or elements of Hercules’ life/exploits as the framework for a story/project set in a different period with different characters/outcomes. You will submit a one-paragraph summary/proposal to me for approval in advance of completing the assignment.

**FEEDBACK**

A central component to the writing intensive aspect of this course is improving your written communication skills through constructive feedback. You will receive feedback on your efforts from three sources: your own reflection, peer critiques and in conferences with your instructor.

**CONFERENCES:** You will meet with the instructor once over the course of the semester for a 15-minute “feedback” conference. This meeting will include a personalized discussion of your assignments and final project. Your instructor will have topics to discuss, but the meeting should be driven by your own reflections about your writing process and finished products. This conference will take place outside class time, during a 15-minute block you will sign up for in advance. Failure to appear at your scheduled meeting without notifying your instructor *at least 24 hours in advance* will result in a lowering of your final course participation grade by one half a letter grade.

**WORKSHOPS:** This course emphasizes a workshop approach to writing that promotes interactive, experiential learning. Your participation in group discussions with your writing group will be central to your success in this class. Your writing group will give you the opportunity to bounce ideas off other people, and to get feedback on your work at multiple points along your writing process. This will not substitute, but rather complement, your instructor’s feedback. Reading and discussing others’ writing, believe it or not, makes you a more thoughtful reader, writer, and editor of your own work.

You will be graded on your participation in writing workshops and in your writing group.

**COURSE ETIQUETTE**

In order to make this classroom a productive and respectful learning environment, please abide by the following rules:

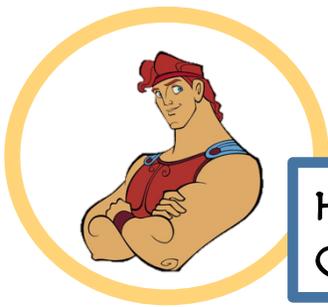
- **ALL CELLPHONES MUST BE AWAY IN A BACKPACK OR PURSE FOR THE DURATION OF THE CLASS PERIOD.**
- **No laptops tablets, or e-readers** They’re a major source of distraction, and you don’t really need them in the class since most of the reading material comes from books you’ve purchased. I \*will\* use powerpoints that will be posted to Canvas and available for download after class.
- Don’t be disruptive or disrespectful while I’m conducting class. Use common sense. **Pay attention.**
- **Do NOT leave before class** is finished for the day. It is distracting to your classmates, and rude to me. If you need to leave early, please let me know before class.
- **No sleeping in class**—you pay to be in this class, get your money’s worth. It is cold and early, but figure out a way to wake up and stay that way.
- Please **follow standard email etiquette:** begin with “Dear Dr. Le Blanc”, make sure to sign your name at the end, try to find the answer on the syllabus before you email.



ROCKULES DOES NOT APPROVE

**HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE**

1. Make sure you do the readings before coming to class every single day! Part of your attendance and participation grade is based on your ability to discuss the readings.
2. Embrace writing as a process. Don’t do anything at the last minute.
3. Ask for help **before** you really need it. Your instructor is always willing to help you, or to point you toward on-campus resources that will benefit you.
4. Don’t let negative emotional entanglements with your writing, your ability to write, or past writing assignments get in your head. The best way to improve your writing is, well, to read and write as often and as widely as you can.
5. Reading and analyzing ancient texts is a learned skill. Be patient, and recognize that it may take some time before you are used to the writing styles, names, and conventions of ancient source material.
6. **TAKE NOTES** in class. Be an active learner. **Participate.**



**HERO RULE #718: PAY ATTENTION, TAKE NOTES, ASK QUESTIONS!**

# LOGISTICS AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

## SNOW DAYS

The university will notify you via email and text message if morning classes are canceled because of inclement weather (i.e. snow or ice). I will follow-up the university's cancellation with an email and Canvas announcement containing instructions for an assignment in-lieu of discussions in-class. Usually, you will take an online reading quiz covering the material assigned for our missed day; I will sometimes also ask you to complete an online class discussion on the Canvas site's Discussion Board. **It is your responsibility to check your email and to complete these assignments when class is canceled.** You will receive several days to complete these assignments, with the understanding that some people may not have ready access to a computer or electronic devices when classes are canceled.

## RELIGIOUS DAYS

State law allows students to have up to two absences for religious reasons per academic year and to be allowed to make up work missed. If this applies to you, you must notify me two weeks in advance and make arrangements to make up missed work at that time. I reserve the right to require you to do this work before your absence.

## SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) in 215 Elliott University Center (<http://ods.dept.uncg.edu/>; email: [oars@uncg.edu](mailto:oars@uncg.edu)). **If you have a documented disability and want to discuss academic accommodations, please talk with me before the end of the second week.**

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

(from the Dean of Students' Webpage): "Academic integrity is founded upon and encompasses the following five values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Supporting and affirming these values is essential to promoting and maintaining a high level of academic integrity. Each member of the academic community must stand accountable for his or her actions. As a result, a community develops in which students learn the responsibilities of citizenship and how to contribute honorably to their professions. If knowledge is to be gained and properly evaluated, it must be pursued under conditions free from dishonesty. Deceit and misrepresentations are incompatible with the fundamental activity of this academic institution and shall not be tolerated. Members of the UNCG community are expected to foster in their own work the spirit of academic honesty and not to tolerate its abuse by others. First responsibility for academic integrity lies with individual students and faculty members of this community. A violation of academic integrity is an act harmful to all other students, faculty and, ultimately, the university. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity Policy: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>."

**The following behaviors constitute a violation of UNCG's academic integrity policy, and will result in referral to the Dean of Students, penalties applied to your grade, and possible university-imposed penalties (including a "0" on the assignment, and/or an "F" in the course:**

- Directly quoting someone else's work without citation (intentionally or unintentionally)
- Summarizing the ideas, opinions or points of other people without citation (intentionally or unintentionally)
- Submitting work done by someone else as your own
- Using outside source material while taking tests/quizzes

**HERO RULE #14: CITE ALL THE THINGS! WHEN IN DOUBT, CITE!**



# COURSE SCHEDULE

\*please note that this schedule is subject to change at any time; changes will be posted to Canvas and sent via email

**Tuesday, January 17: Introduction; Who is Herakles/Heracles/Hercules?**

**Reading:** In-class handout on Hercules in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

**Thursday, January 19: Historical Background, Greco-Roman Mythology and the Gods**

**Reading:** Look over PDF on Greek and Roman gods (PDF on Canvas)

**Tuesday, January 24: Ancient Heroes; Reading & Analyzing Ancient Texts & Images; Social, Cultural, Architectural Setting of Our Texts**

**Reading:** Selections from Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* on Perseus, Bellerophon, Theseus (PDF on Canvas)

**Thursday, January 26: Social, Cultural, Architectural Setting of Our Texts; Theories of Mythology; Hercules Overview**

**Reading:** Selections from Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* (PDF on Canvas)

**Tuesday, January 31: Earliest Sources for Hercules**

**Reading:** PDF on Canvas

**Thursday, February 2: The Labors of Hercules**

**Reading:** handout on Canvas

**Tuesday, February 7: The Labors of Hercules in Art and Architecture**

**Reading:** TBA

**Thursday, February 9: Euripides' *Herakles***

**Reading:** Euripides' *Herakles* lines 1-450 (PDF on Canvas—print and bring this whole play to class!)

**Tuesday, February 14: Euripides' *Herakles***

**Reading:** Euripides' *Herakles* lines 450-909

**Thursday, February 16: Euripides' *Herakles***

**Reading:** Euripides' *Herakles* lines 909-end

**Tuesday February 21: Hercules as the hero of Athletes, Gladiators**

**Reading:** Ancient sources on the foundation of the Olympic games (PDF on Canvas): Pindar, *Olympian 6, 10*; Pausanias 5.7.6-10

## EXAM & ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

**M 1/23**

Take syllabus quiz (Canvas) by 11:59pm

**W 1/25**

Take gods and history quiz (Canvas) by 11:59pm

**Th 2/23**

Rough Draft Article Analysis #1 Due

**T 3/7**

Article Analysis #1 Due

**Th 3/9**

Midterm

**T 3/21**

Creative Project Proposal Due

**Th 3/23**

Article Analysis #2 Sign-up

**Th 3/30**

Article Analysis #2 Outline Due

**Th 4/6**

Article Analysis #2 Source Overview Due

**Th 4/13**

Article Analysis #2 ½ page main argument summary due

**Th 4/20**

Article Analysis #2 Draft Due

**Th 4/27**

Article Analysis #2 Final Draft Due

**TUESDAY MAY 9,  
12-1:45pm**

**FINAL EXAM + CREATIVE  
PROJECT DUE**

# COURSE SCHEDULE 2

**Thursday, February 23: Draft Workshop (Article Analysis #1)**

**BRING TWO HARD COPIES OF A COMPLETE DRAFT WITH YOU TO CLASS**

**Tuesday, February 28: Sophocles *Women of Trachis***

**Reading:** Sophocles, *Women of Trachis* lines 1-633 (PDF on Canvas—print and bring this whole play to class!)

**Thursday, March 2: Sophocles *Women of Trachis***

**Reading:** Sophocles, *Women of Trachis* lines 634-end

**Tuesday, March 7: Hercules as Comedic Hero; Article Analysis #1 DUE**

**Reading:** Stafford, Chapter 5 (selections, “The Comic Hero”, PDF on Canvas); Selections from: Aristophanes, *The Frogs*; Euripides, *Alcestris*; others (PDF on Canvas)

**Thursday, March 9: MIDTERM**

**Tuesday, March 14-Thursday, March 16: NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK**

**HERO RULE #43: BRING YOUR TEXTS TO CLASS EVERYDAY SO YOU CAN MARK UP, TAKE NOTES, AND REFER TO SPECIFIC PARTS!**



**Tuesday, March 21: Hero Cult and Worshipping Hercules; selections from Seneca’s *Herakles Oetaeus*; Creative Project Proposal Due**

**Reading:** Selections from Seneca’s *Herakles Oetaeus* (PDF on Canvas)

**Thursday March 23: Hercules as Hero-God, and Compared to Other Heroes (Euripides’ *Philoctetes*); Article Analysis Sign-Up**

**Reading:** Euripides’ *Philoctetes*, lines 1-974 (PDF on Canvas—print and bring this whole play to class!)

**Tuesday, March 27: Hercules and Other Heroes: Euripides’ *Philoctetes*, and the *Argonautica***

**Reading:** Finish Euripides’ *Philoctetes*, lines 974-end; selections from Apollonius, *Argonautica*, Book 1 (PDF on Canvas)

**Thursday, March 30: Hercules and other heroes in the Hellenistic World; *Argonautica*; Article Analysis #2 Outline Due**

**Reading:** selections from Apollonius, *Argonautica*, Books 1, 2, 4 (PDF on Canvas)

**Tuesday, April 4: Hercules, Government, and Rulers in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds**

**Reading:** Stafford chapter 5 (“Political Herakles”) (PDF on Canvas)

# COURSE SCHEDULE 3

**Thursday, April 6: Madness and the King/Hero: Seneca's *Hercules Furens*; Article Analysis Source Overview Due**

**Reading:** Seneca's *Hercules Furens* lines 1-893(PDF on Canvas—print and bring this whole play to class!)

**Tuesday, April 11: Madness and the King/Hero: Seneca's *Hercules Furens***

**Reading:** Seneca's *Hercules Furens* lines 893-end

**Thursday, April 13: Children of Hercules; Article Analysis #2 Main Argument Analysis Due**

**Reading:** Euripides' *Children of Heracles* lines 1-607 (PDF on Canvas—print and bring this whole play to class!)

**Tuesday, April 18: Children of Hercules**

**Reading:** Euripides' *Children of Heracles* lines 608-end

**Thursday, April 20: Article Analysis #2 Draft Workshop**

**BRING TWO HARD COPIES OF A DRAFT (at least 3 pages!) WITH YOU TO CLASS**

**Tuesday, April 24: Hercules, the Legendary Journeys**

**Reading:** Stafford Chapter 7 ("Post-Classical Variations; pg. 201-224) (PDF on Canvas)

**Thursday, April 27: LAST DAY OF CLASS; Hercules, the Legendary Journeys; Article Analysis #2 Due**

**Reading:** Stafford Chapter 7 ("Post-Classical Variations; pg. 225-244)

**FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY, MAY 9, 12:00-1:45pm**  
**CREATIVE PROJECT DUE @ BEGINNING OF FINAL**  
**EXAM**

